

Colchagua Revisited

In the time since a group of WineMine wine club members visited South America, the wines of Chile, and especially its most dynamic region Colchagua Valley, have continued to grow in quality and prestige. WineMine has featured the wines of Viña Casa Silva for nearly two years and is pleased to introduce their award-winning 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon.

Mario Pablo Silva, the young dynamic managing director of Viña Casa Silva, tasting a range of their latest vintages



But, first, an update on the happenings in the Valley. Things have continued to build on the mini viticultural revolution that started in the mid-1990's. Vineyards continue to expand in both increased hectares and a growing producer base. This expansion of the vineyards has led directly to a massive improvement in the diversity of the wines because it has opened up new and promising areas for the vines to exploit. Put simply, Colchagua has been given a new lease of life.

One significant new area is Marchihue. It covers a broad swathe in the west of the region, where poor soils, rolling hillsides and strong afternoon breezes create an environment of controlled stress for the vines, lowering yields and creating naturally concentrated and characterful wines. In fact, so fast and furious has been the growth that the government has been forced to put a moratorium on the issuing of new water rights for fear of collapsing water supplies in the area.

Other new areas to look out for in the coastal west of the region include Pumanza and Lolol.

In terms of varieties, Carmenère is a clear favourite in the region, suited as it is to the warm climate and deep soils. But scratch the surface and it is clear that a host of varieties are doing promising things here, from old-vine Pinot Noir to Viognier and Sangiovese. Syrah is well established and Malbec, another regional forte, produced from many old vines produce a ripe style of wine with earthy, graphite undertones.

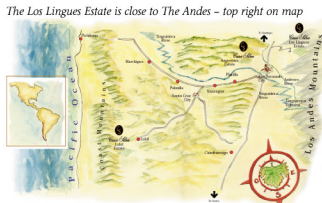
Colchagua is a hive of activity and action. It is a region that encapsulates much of what is currently making Chile one of the most exciting and engaging wine countries in the world.

At Casa Silva, agronomist and viticultural sage Yerko Moreno is overseeing a three-year micro-terroir study. It is a statement of intent from a winery that has grown from bulk production into fine wine territory in only ten short years. Expansion in both eastern and western areas of the Valley is yielding results giving more balance

and character to their wines. Sr. Moreno is also the Director of the Wine Technology Centre (CTVV) at Talca University, established in 1996 to contribute to the development of the export wine industry and offer technological services to the national wine industry. CLA



Cabernet grapes on their way to the winery



The Los Lingues Estate is close to The Andes – top right on map

New to WineMine, the award-winning 2005 Cabernet Sauvignon from Viña Casa Silva!!!

Winner of Decanter Magazine's 2006 award Regional Chile Bordeaux Varietal and best regional red wine under £10 – a WineMine best value at the introductory price of €6.95

Lovely deep spicy note of black fruits and good quality oak. Delicious, big, sweet, juicy cabernet. Lovely oak treatment, with a long finish. Well made, lovely balance. 13.5% alcohol.

A note about the 2005 vintage (rated ***** the most highly rated Chilean vintage for many years, especially for red wines). Top wines will benefit from cellaring.



The wine has not yet arrived at the warehouse, but we expect it to be available mid April.